

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

A typographical error in Claim 4 has been corrected.

Claims 1, 2 and 5 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by the newly applied U.S. patent 5,975,995 (Hykes et al). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 recites a step of “*simultaneously* grinding plural grinding portions of a workpiece using plural grinding wheels” and further recites a step of “controlling said grinding step [of *simultaneously* grinding plural grinding portions of a workpiece using plural grinding wheels] such that grinding by the predetermined grinding wheel is terminated prior to a termination of grinding by the other grinding wheel.” As previously explained, the simultaneous grinding step is thereby performed so that grinding by a predetermined grinding wheel is terminated prior to the termination of grinding by the other grinding wheel. The order of termination of the grinding operations in the simultaneous grinding step is therefore predictable, and so can be relied upon to control grinding more accurately (see sentence bridging pages 3 and 4).

Hykes et al fails to teach controlling a grinding step of *simultaneously* grinding plural grinding portions using plural grinding wheels such that grinding by a predetermined grinding wheel is terminated prior to a termination of grinding by the other grinding wheel. Figures 5 and 6 of Hykes et al each illustrate a step of simultaneously grinding plural grinding portions using plural grinding wheels. For example, the grinding wheel 152 and 162 perform simultaneous grinding in each step. However there is no description in Hykes et al that grinding by a predetermined one of the grinding wheels 152 and 162 is terminated prior to a termination of grinding by the other grinding wheel in either of the steps of Figures 5 and 6.

It is Applicants' understanding of the Examiner's position that the step of controlling grinding such that grinding by a predetermined grinding wheel is terminated prior to a termination of grinding by the other grinding wheel is supposedly provided by Fig. 7 in Hykes et al. That is, since only the grinding wheel 152 is employed in the final grinding step of Fig. 7 of Hykes et al., when lumping all of the steps of Figs. 4-7 of Hykes et al. together as the claimed grinding step, grinding by the (predetermined) grinding wheel 162 is terminated prior to a termination of grinding by the grinding wheel 152.

However, this interpretation of the prior art is not consistent with the plain language of the rejected claims. The claims recite that the grinding step in which grinding by a predetermined one of the grinding wheels is terminated prior to a termination of grinding by the other grinding wheel is a step of *simultaneously* grinding plural grinding portions using plural grinding wheels, and that it is this step which is controlled in the controlling step. This does not include the step of Fig. 7 of Hykes et al. which is *not* a step of simultaneously grinding plural grinding portions using plural grinding wheels and in which grinding and control are performed for only the grinding wheel 152.

Moreover, it is not consistent with the plain language of the claims to lump all of the steps of Figs. 4-7 of Hykes et al. together as the grinding step. While it is true that the grinding step of Fig. 6 is a step of simultaneously grinding plural grinding portions using plural grinding wheels, and that grinding using the grinding wheel 152 in Fig 7 is completed after the termination of the grinding using grinding wheels including the grinding wheel 162 in the step of Fig. 6, this is not evidence of the claimed step of controlling a step of simultaneously grinding plural grinding portions of a workpiece using plural grinding wheels such that grinding by a predetermined grinding wheel is terminated prior to a termination of grinding by the other grinding wheel: since the control in Fig. 7 of Hykes et al. is provided *after* the step of simultaneously grinding plural grinding portions of a workpiece using plural

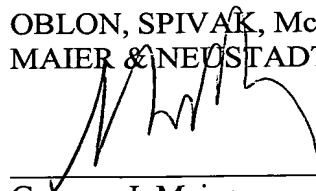
grinding wheels, it cannot be a step of controlling a step of simultaneously grinding plural grinding portions of a workpiece using plural grinding wheels. Thus the control evidenced by Fig. 7 is not the control of a step of *simultaneously* grinding plural grinding portions of a workpiece using plural grinding wheels and cannot be used to anticipate the claims.

Concerning the rejection of the dependent Claims 3-4 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious over Hykes et al in view of EP '621, it is noted that EP '621 was applied only to teach the further subject matter of the dependent claims. As explained in the previous responses, EP '621 does not teach controlling a grinding step of simultaneously grinding plural grinding portions of a workpiece using plural grinding wheels such that grinding by the predetermined grinding wheel is terminated prior to a termination of grinding by the other grinding wheel, and so EP '621 cannot be relied upon to overcome the shortcomings of Hykes et al with respect to the subject matter of any of the claims.

Applicants therefore believe that the present application is in a condition for allowance and respectfully solicit an early Notice of Allowability.

Respectfully submitted,

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